

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (previously presented): A method for improving the condition for elderly cats, the method comprising administering to the elderly cat an effective amount of a nutritional composition which contains a calcium source, a source of vitamins D, E and K, and β -carotene.

Claim 2 (cancelled):

Claim 3 (previously presented): A method according to claim 1 in which the nutritional composition includes a zinc source.

Claim 4 (previously presented): A method according to claim 1 in which nutritional composition is a nutritionally complete pet food.

Claim 5 (previously presented): A method according to claim 1 in which the nutritional composition further comprises a prebiotic and/or a probiotic micro-organism.

Claim 6 (original): A method according to claim 5 in which the prebiotic is selected from the group of inulin, fructooligosaccharides and plant materials which contain inulin and/or fructooligosaccharides.

Claim 7 (previously presented): A method according to claim 1 in which the nutritional composition further comprises a source of glutamine.

Claim 8 (previously presented): A method for increasing the longevity of an elderly cat, the method comprising administering to the elderly cat an effective amount of a nutritional composition which contains a calcium source, vitamins D, E and K, and β -carotene.

Claim 9 (cancelled):

Claim 10 (previously presented): A method according to claim 8 in which the composition comprises a vitamin source providing vitamin E.

Claim 11 (previously presented): A method according to claim 8 in which the nutritional composition includes a zinc source.

Claim 12 (previously presented): A method according to claim 8 in which the nutritional composition is a nutritionally complete pet food.

Claim 13 (previously presented): A method according to claim 8 in which the nutritional composition further comprises a prebiotic and/or a probiotic micro-organism.

Claim 14 (original): A method according to claim 13 in which the prebiotic is selected from the group of inulin, fructooligosaccharides and plant materials which contain inulin and/or fructooligosaccharides.

Claim 15 (previously presented): A method according to claim 8 in which the nutritional composition further comprises a source of glutamine.

Claim 16 (previously presented): A method according to claim 8 in which the composition is administered in an amount effective to increase the activity level of the pet.

Claim 17 (previously presented): A method for increasing the longevity of an elderly cat, the method comprising administering to the cat an effective amount of a nutritional composition which contains a calcium source, a zinc source, β -carotene at a level of at least 4 mg/1000 kcal, and vitamin E at a level of at least 75 IU/1000 kcal.

Claim 18 (currently amended): A method according to claim ~~23~~ 17 in which the elderly cat is administered a daily amount of at least about 0.25 mg/kg body weight of β -carotene, at least about 3.5 IU/kg body weight of vitamin E, at least about 0.15 g/kg body weight of calcium and at least about 2.5 mg/kg body weight of zinc.

Claim 19 (previously presented): A method of increasing the activity level of an elderly cat, the method comprising administering to the cat an effective amount of a nutritional composition which contains a calcium source, a zinc source, β -carotene at a level of at least 4 mg/1000 kcal, and vitamin E at a level of at least 75 IU/1000 kcal.

Claims 20-28 (cancelled):

Claim 29 (currently amended): A method for reducing a sign of aging in an elderly cat, the method comprising the steps of providing a pet food composition comprising a source of calcium, ~~and a source of β -carotene, and a source of vitamin E,~~ making the composition available to a minder of an elderly pet, ~~and providing means of encouraging the pet minder to administer the said composition to the pet on a regular basis,~~ and administering said composition to the pet.

Claim 30 (previously presented): A process for maintaining or increasing total blood protein in an elderly cat comprises administering to the pet a foodstuff comprising a source of calcium and a source of β -carotene and a source of vitamin E .

Claim 31 (currently amended): A process according to claim ~~36~~ 30 wherein the foodstuff is capable of providing the pet a daily amount of at least about 0.25 mg/kg of the pet's body weight of β -carotene, at least about 3.5 IU/kg body weight of vitamin E, at least about 0.15 g/kg body weight of calcium and at least about 2.5 mg/kg body weight of zinc.

Claim 32 (previously presented): A method for the increasing of total blood protein in an elderly cat, the method comprising administering a composition having been formulated to provide at least about 0.25 mg/kg of the cat's body weight of β -carotene, at least about 3.5 IU/kg body weight of vitamin E, at least about 0.15 g/kg body weight of calcium and at least about 2.5 mg/kg body weight of zinc when fed as a complete meal.

Claim 33 (previously presented): A method for increasing the physical energy levels in an elderly cat, the method comprising administering an effective amount of a nutritional composition which contains a calcium source, a zinc source, β -carotene and vitamins D and E.

Claim 34 (previously presented): A method for reducing a sign of aging in an elderly cat, the method comprising the step of administering a composition comprising a source of calcium, zinc, β -carotene, and a source of vitamin E.